

**Saved by a Shark**  
**Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary**

Visuals	Audio
<p>Swimming sharks</p> <p>Footage of boat at sunset, dolphins swimming, diver in a school of fish.</p> <p>Two rays swimming</p> <p>Oil rig underwater, diver swimming near oilrig super structure</p> <p>Diver swimming over coral reef</p> <p>Footage of manta ray</p> <p>Footage of coral reef</p> <p>Deep reef fly-by animation</p> <p>Footage of coral reef, fish, lobster.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Imagine yourself 100 miles off the coast of Texas, drifting amongst a dazzling array of fish, some 70 feet below the ocean surface. Now imagine giant steel girders rising from the dark depths to support a huge oil rig looming just above the surface. Combine this offshore oil development, with clear beautiful reefs and you have the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.</p> <p>The Flower Garden's, which are made up of three separate banks, are actually salt domes formed 170 million years ago. Thriving communities of corals, fish and invertebrates cover these domes today, leaving almost no trace of their ancient past.</p>

Footage of coral reef and manta ray. Fish and shark	With over 200 hundred recorded species of fish, divers can see and swim with large sharks and other predatory fish throughout the year.
Shark swimming around diver	Hammerheads, silky sharks, sandbars and dusky sharks are often encountered at the Flower Gardens, depending on the time of the year.
Divers swimming along coral reef with large fish	These sharks and other large predatory fish like barracuda, are not only a thrill to see underwater, but also a vital part of the reef ecosystem.
Footage of different shark species	Similar to lions of the Serengeti, sharks and other predatory fish, eat sick and injured prey, removing the genetically weak from the reef.
Close-up of barracuda and school of fish.	This selective feeding behavior helps to ensure the success of each species and the reef community over time.
Footage of hammerhead shark, and large school of reef fish	
Footage of moray eel	
Footage of ray, parrotfish.	
Coral reef	Not all predatory fish come with a mouth full of teeth however. Parrotfish, for example feed on small polyps residing in the hard calcareous
Footage of whale shark	army

<p>Footage of plankton in water column.</p> <p>Footage of shark and fish.</p>	<p>of corals. Others like the whale shark feed on tiny planktonic plants and animals drifting in the water column. These important predators play a significant role in the oceanic web of life.</p>
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